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MARGERY RAE.

BV

MARY MCD. SANTLEY.

MARGERY RAE.

BY

MRS. MARY McD. SANTLEY.
" "

" O Lord, how long!—one human soul
Is more than any parchment scroll,
Or any flag thy winds unroll."

—Whittier.

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TO ALL THOSE WHO SUFFER, BECAUSE SOME LOVED ONE
HAS LOOKED UPON THE WINE WHEN IT WAS
RED IN THE CUP, THIS LITTLE VOL-
UME IS AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED.

MARY MCD. SANTLEY.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS tale was written because the Author was possessor of the facts, which make a continuous chain from its beginning to its end; and her heart burned and ached because of that possession, and refused to be relieved until the voice was lifted up against the wrongs which make such a story possible. Any one who may read it is asked not to note the uncouth drapery, but to consider what it enfolds.

M. McD. S.

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"We wait beneath the furnace-blast
The pang of transformation ;
Not painlessly doth God recast
And mould anew the nation."

"Give Prayer and purse
To stay the curse
Whose wrong we share,
Whose shame we bear,
Whose end shall gladden Heaven!"

"Before the joy of peace must come
The pains of purifying.
God give us grace
Each in his place
To bear his lot,
And, murmuring not,
Endure and wait and labor!"

"but, meanwhile, pain
Is bitter and tears are salt : our voices take
A sober tone ; our very household songs
Are heavy with a nation's griefs and wrongs ;
And innocent mirth is chastened for the sake
Of the brave hearts that never more shall beat,
The eyes that smile no more, the unreturning feet!"

—*Whittier.*

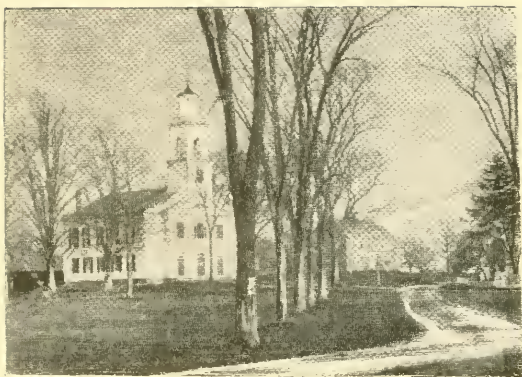


A SENTINEL GRIM O'ERLOOKING THE GREEN.

MARGERY RAE.

The stream through the valley rippled and ran
Tall daisies and grass and mosses among ;
It rippled and ran and splashed o'er the stone,
'Through forest the song was sometimes a moan,
In meadow it smiled as only stream can
When o'er it a cover of light is flung.

A cottage quaint at the foot of the hill
With a porch and trellis and ivy screen ;
Round the porch hung arms of the wild white rose ;
For support, the trellis the ivy chose ;
Near by was an old, brown, moss-covered mill,—
A sentinel grim o'erlooking the green.—



THEY KNELT IN HIS HOUSE.

By the riverside two children played,
Two roguish little ones healthy and red.
“Ha! ha!” laughed Margery, Margery Rae;
“Ha! ha!” echoed Rob, “on the stream we’ll play;
Let us sail a boat for we’re not afraid;”
And down the wide valley the sailors fled.

“Now, Margery Rae, let us make our craft,”
Said Robert the captain of summers eight;—
A slab of pine with three masts of willow,
A gingham sail and ’twas on the billow.—
A bonny wee boat, and our Robert laughed
While he gave her a load of flowery freight.

Happy day! these children were free from care,
While the mother spun in the humble cot,
While the father wrought in the old brown mill
And to God gave thanks, with a cheerful will,
For the blessing of health and peace most rare,
And children and life in this quiet spot.



AND THE JUNE IS HERE.

On a Sabbath morn in the plainest dress,
When the sun shone warm and the sky was clear,
Robert Rae, his children and good wife Jean
Went out to the hill-tops and knelt unseen ;
To adore their Maker, their sins confess,
Where only the presence of God seemed near.

In the afternoon, when the old church bell
In the village afar rang sweetest chime,
They knelt in "His House" with reverent mien,
And their voices in song were heard between
The sermon and prayer His praise to swell ;
Then, refreshed, sought home in the eventime.

* * * * *

The summers have fled and the June is here,
Wild flowers bloom in the valley again ;
Far up the stream the gray rocks tower high,
Hid by leaves and vines and blossoms shy ;
These moss-cushioned fronts ne'er echo a fear,
But always are speaking of peace to men.



ROB'S VESSEL, HAD SAILED.

A budding woman, like an op'ning rose
Suffused with the bloom of young, rich life,
With elastic step sought the myrtle vine
And the dark, wild pinks, for a wreath to twine—
For in years gone by, she, bird-like chose
To drop some seeds where they now fell rife.

Her basket was full to the overflow,
A whistle she heard and a youth she saw ;
“ Ha ! ha ! ” laughed Margery, Margery Rae,
“ Ha ! ha ! ” echoed Jamie, “ to-day's the day : ”
'Twas the old, sweet story, and each must know,
'Twas a charming picture as one can draw.

Aye, their love was pure, and they wed that night,
She wore with the myrtle and pinks a smile
When she plighted her troth to James Adair ;
To love and to keep he, too, promised there ;
To one looking on 'twas well to unite
And parents and brother were pleased the while.



FAR UP THE STREAM.

So Margery Rae left the home nest dear ;
In cottage again the spinning-wheel whirled ;
The father wrought on, but the days were long ;
Rob's vessel had sailed, and he missed the song
Of his blithe, brown lassie, whose bird-notes clear
Waked echoes in valley, in choir were heard.

* * * * *

I would that my tale might end just here !
I ask, ought the bitter bloom near the sweet ?
Ought quiet and right always jostled be
By wrong and unrest, and by misery ?
Ought loving hearts tremble and break from fear ?
In anguish I cry, O God ! is it meet ?

* * * * *

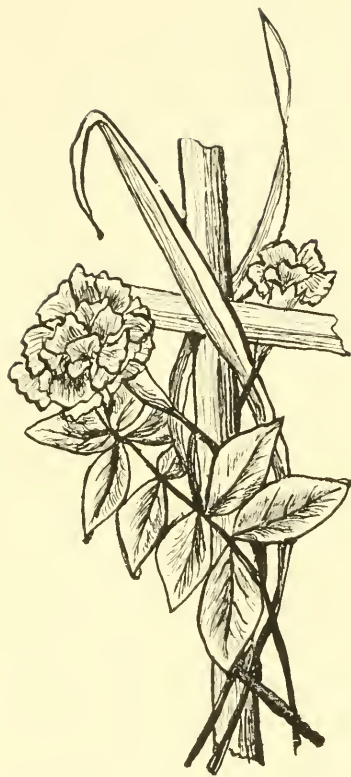
James Adair took his wife far up the stream
To a neat little cot of purest white ;
Pale honeysuckle crept along the eaves
And filled the air with the scent of the leaves ;
The near hills wore a veil of joy ; and 'twould seem
That all things aquivered with new delight.



THE WIFE SAT ALONE.

They were young and strong and they idled not,
But lifted the duties of life with ease.
He was kind and brave in those early days;
She was good to see in her winsome ways;
Friends said, when they came, "it's a charming spot,
This home, this forest, these hills all please."

When the rose-laden days of June once more
Under canopy blue and a sunny sky,
Came into the valley along with the birds,
Whose songs brought to mind all the sweetest words,
And the sheen of all times gone on before,
When tune, and color, and warmth each vie
The one with the other to make life glad,
The wife sat alone in a leafy bower;
A dainty, wee garment edging with lace;
A faintest shadow lay over the face;
The snatches of song seemed a little sad,
In a minor key heard that noontide hour.



TO ENTWINE HER CROSSES.

The chill of the autumn followed the June—
When sun-time is short and night-time is long—
And alone she sat by her hearth forlorn
Awaiting a footstep and dawn of morn ;
A desolate life! and it came so soon,
The agonized heart for one filled with song.

O the nights grew long, and sombre the days,
And travail and sorrow alone she bore ;
Till a little child lay warm at her breast
Which she tightly held and fondly caressed,
And *thought* that sweet prattle and tender ways
In this op'ning bud were folded in store.

The years sped by on the fleetest of wing
And left all unasked new guests at her door ;
To some her heart-portals flew open wide,
And she fondly hoped they would there abide ;
For sunshine and trust their own welcome bring,
And she dreamed sometimes she'd be sad no more.



THE COLD CLAY TENDERLY GUARDING.

But, alas for hope, when the sparkling wine
In influence subtle o'er will holds sway,
Her person and home she adorned with care,
Her heart-beats were echoes of fervent prayer
And all for him ; so she sought to entwine
Her crosses with garlands of love each day.

In her arms were folded young children three,
And a mother welcome to each she gave ;
She looked for the rose, but she gathered the rue,
And her heart was pierced each time anew
Till the fetters were broken, her soul set free
To scale the summits awaiting the brave.

We stand by her bier : on her soft brown hair
Where the pinks and myrtle of the long ago
Lay, a mass of velvety, rich dark hues,
Is a paler wreath, which she did not choose ;
And the cold clay tenderly guarding there,
Are the dear old parents, bent by their woe.



We may tell you now of the hard, sad fate,
For the heart that was crushed is still and cold :
She'll not hear the words a rude world speaks,
When it tells of the wrong that blanched her cheeks ;
She heralded naught of the drunken hate,
Her tale of sorrow ne'er stooped to unfold.

O, the world knows not, how endures a wife,
Because she is constant and keeps her vow ;
Under blow and curse she cherishes yet
The one who oft hastens his pledge to forget ;
A sacrifice costly she lays down her life—
Long since it was true and so is it now.

* * * * *

O stay, and devote one moment to thought !
What one hundred men, for whatever sum,
May say, that *the ten* may be given a draught
That when to the dregs they've blindly quaffed—
And unto your coffers the gold they've brought—
Shall muttering imbeciles straightway become ?



THAT MILLS BY THE RIVERS.

O, see the thin hands, upstretched unto you ;
The wide, hungry eyes, in upturned appeal,
Burning into your own the unanswered prayer,
“ O sell not the soul for the glitter and glare
Of cold yellow gold. O could we but woo
One smile that would say : “ We hear you and feel,

That never to us was given the right
Our streets to pave, or our fountains to fill,
With tears overflowing from tired eyes
And with Children's hearts, in a tax disguise.”
No equity gives to numbers or might
The privilege innocent blood to spill.

O, we know that greed is selfishly fed ;
That mills by the rivers, with wheels that haste,
Are rolling by day and rumbling by night,
To distill with unceasing, cruel might
The corn that was meant for our children's bread
Into essence of death, disease, and waste.

Shame, shame unto him, whose hand drops the seed
Of sin and decay into soil warm and new,
The harvest of which his castle will build
Of marble, and gems, and its halls will gild ;
Who shares in permitting this awful deed
Must in ratio bear the shame of it too.

'Tho' millions have asked from rum to be freed
Have prayed and petitioned, continue to sue,
A scroll reaching down from the sky to this planet,
A list begun in the morning of time,
Signed by the redeemed, both angels and men,
And by the dear Christ, with his pitiful pen,
Would yet lack a vote when lawmakers scan it,
The senator's vote to suppress this crime.

* * * * *

This loving heart ached, it bled and was sore
When all her sorrow and trial had come.
Would you know aught more of her children three ?
I must tell it all ;—Ah, woe is me !—
They were fools ;—All three that Margery bore—
A fool begat them while reeking with rum.

The eye of the Lord, both searching and mild,
Looked over the battlements in the sky
And saw the anguish, too great to express,
When first to her broken heart she confessed,
This baby of mine is a "*Drunkard's Child*,"
But its meed of love I must ne'er deny.

O, she yearned and gazed in the vacant eye,
Still thinking her God might look from above
And perhaps the smile of a dawning mind,
If she closely searched she yet might find ;
But alas ! alas ! none could she descry,
While closer she pressed it in mother-love.

E'en the Lord's own day was now not exempt ;
That day, when a child she'd learned to revere
And hail with delight each restful hour,
She dreaded now ; for under the power
Of the demon of rum, unwashed, unkempt,
Her husband caused her the Sabbath to fear.

Sometimes, in the morn he would say: "Sweet Wife,
Let us up and away our God to adore ;"
How her heart would leap, and her eyes would glow,
When such thought of duty, and her he'd show ;
But at close of the service would be a strife
To enter or not the shop's wide-flung door.

Ah ! do you not know that he'd not go by ;
For what were his wife, or friend, or the day,
When a score of saloons, all open by law,
On his right, and left and in front he saw.
He entered these dens ofttimes with a sigh,
For often from them he'd promised to stay.

Once, after 'tending his first foolish son,
For seven whole days he locked himself in,
And with bolts and bars fastened all secure ;
Determined the agony he would endure,
Til over his thirst he'd a victory won,
Nor longer be held a captive by sin.

From his brow great drops of agony flowed,
He pressed his long nails into flesh of palm,
He agonized long till the blood flowed free
Then walked he abroad in his liberty ;
The licensed shop saw, to his finger tips glowed
In frenzy rushed in for the deathful balm.

“James Adair was cruel,” I hear you say ;
Aye, in truth he was to himself and son,
And to her whose hymn from a Psalm of praise
He turned to a chant of mournful lays.
The seed early sown bore harvest to-day ;
A failure his life, his manhood undone ;
He fought to conquer full many a day,
But legalized-*rum* the victory won.

Ah, surely 'tis best for man to do right,
His sin falls a curse on his loved ones too.
Three foolish children ! All the mother-pain,
Her arms full of sorrow was all the gain ;
On her pathway there fell not one ray of light

No star-glint of hope above in the blue ;
The stoniest heart might melt at the sight
But the sin-wrought work could never undo.

In every hamlet are saintly souls,
Who suffer and starve for love and for bread,
Who have saddest eye and have wannest cheek
For need of these, both, and they must not speak ;
Must inscribe the want on the secret scrolls
Of the inmost heart, and no murmur said.
Ah ! the blossom of love with its fragrance sweet,
Lies withered and crushed under rum perfume ;
And still we supinely crouch at the feet
Of rum-venders who our substance consume.

“ Endurance and patience,” you calmly say,
“ Is becoming all freemen heroic.”
Your sires fought bravely the cause of the slave ;
They’re free at the price of many a grave ;
Must blood be shed in this cause of to-day ?
You can say Politician and Stoic.



THIS WOMAN, WHO SPENT LIFE'S FIRST SUNNY MORN.

Must a dead lamb be in your houses all
Howsoever your flock may be tended?
Must there ever be sent to early graves,
Faithful wives and mothers, who're more than slaves?
If so, 'twere a fact the strong to appall:
From such woe may we all be defended.

* * * * *

This woman, who spent life's first sunny morn
In a quiet vale by the mill and stream,
Enjoying the birds and the falling showers,
The nights full of stars and sweet breath of flowers,
Had within her a spirit in Heaven born
Inspiring her courage and guiding her will.

But sorrow long pent will sometimes o'erflow,—
Clouds when o'er-full spill the dashes of rain,
And we and the daylight are blinded with tears,—
So, her heart deprived of all that endears,
Companionship loving forced to forego



NOV 1890
NOW RESTS IN ITS LOW, GREEN TENT

At intervals long found resistance vain.
And one time in the hush of night when alone,—
A tired child, in a wide silent land,—
She burst into tears, when her lord returned ;
His rum-kindled passions within him burned,
When he saw her tremble and heard her moan,
And he dealt, with his angry, strong right hand,
On her temple a sudden and fatal blow,
Sending Margery Rae to an early grave.
Her body now rests in its low, green tent ;
The three feeble little ones soon were sent
To the home our Rulers are pleased to bestow
On such children, born of rum-loving slave.

When his patient wife lay prone on the floor
James Adair looked down on the tear stained face
And no longer was mad: O, never a word,
Though sharp as ever was edged like a sword,
Could have pierced his heart to the very core,
As the lips that were mute in that silent place.

“O return!” he exclaimed, “I repent! I repent!”
But not one sound through that silence was sent;
Her voice, her footstep would come never more
To greet his return, with music and grace.

When into his mind surged thoughts of the past,
And all that the future would bring unto him,
A gulf of despair yawned wide at his feet
His soul to entomb in torment complete;
He muttered and moaned; daylight came at last;
The story he told; to eternity passed.

And the strong young man of the days of yore,
By the side of wife under folds of green
Now sleeps. They were killed by legalized rum,
Ere their days had told out half of their sum;
And the world rolls on with its deafening roar
Made the clashing of greed and self between.

Ah! well might the winds a requiem sigh,
In pleading the trees stretch forth their long arms,



DARK PINKS.

The face of the sun be darkened by cloud,
The blue arch above in gloom to enshroud ;
For man, in whose soul Jehovah on high
The breath of life breathed, yields all to sin's charm.

* * * * *

The stream through the valley ripples and runs
Tall daisies and fern and mosses among ;
It ripples and runs and splashes o'er stone,
Through forest the song is sometimes a moan ;
In mead it smiles where it's kissed by the sun
And o'er it no shadow of cloud is flung.

Robert Rae now stoops and is white and old,
And his good wife Jean murmurs low and sad,
" The just God will come with a flaming sword
And cut down sin as we know by His word."
And, because he is right, her son strong and bold
Will battle to make the sorrowful glad.

Dark pinks and the myrtle bloom near the bed
Where Margery sleeps till the Trump shall sound,



THE ROCKS STILL, TOWER HIGH.

And the mighty Angel, "One foot on land
The other on sea," majestic, shall stand
And declare that this grave must give up its dead ;
With saints and the glorified Lord she'll be found.

So the years shall come 'til this day appear ;
Wild flowers shall bloom again and again ;
Far up the stream the rocks still tower high
Hid by leaves and vines and blossoms shy ;
The moss-cushioned fronts ne'er echo a fear,
But always be speaking of "Peace unto men."

Yes, "Peace unto men," for the gath'ring throngs
Are coming from near, are coming from far ;
A forerunner cries, "The sound of the feet
In onrolling waves, with hope, comes to greet
The ear of the weary, and victory's songs
In chorus shall sound from star unto star."

The brave falter not, but turn to the breeze
The bosom, through wrong left bleeding and bare ;



PEACE UNTO MEN.

O, citizen ! of these how many must die
Ere the shield of defense your hand lifts on high ?
God help those who falter ; strengthen weak knees ;
Teach all to use weapons of action and prayer.

While through the long night it flows 'til the morn,
Sweet Margery Rae, thy blood yields perfume !
The Lord holds him guilty who turns a deaf ear
And walks coldly by, nor heeds the hot tear
Of the bruised and crushed, the sad and forlorn,
Whose wails are not silenced, because in the tomb.

WELLINGTON, OHIO,
March, 1889.

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